



COVID-19 General Vaccination FAQ

(Information updated 12/8/20)

The following FAQ contains general questions and answers regarding the COVID-19 vaccines, from development to distribution. The information is from the Centers for Disease Control, Texas Health and Human Services, and other expert sources.

FAQ topics covered below:

- Receiving the Vaccine
- Vaccine Safety
- Vaccine Development & Distribution
- Supply & Demand of the Vaccine

Buckner is working with government agencies to obtain further details about the process of making vaccines available at our communities. Once we have that information, we will provide a second FAQ with information specific to vaccination clinics at Buckner senior living communities.

RECEIVING THE VACCINE

Q. When will the first Buckner associates and residents receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

A. We are working closely with representatives from the state, as well as the pharmacies assigned by the state to distribute the vaccine through on-site vaccination clinics. We will announce the dates for the clinics to all residents, authorized emergency contacts, and associates once they are confirmed.

Q. Are senior living community residents required to get a COVID-19 vaccination?

A. There is no federal, state or local mandate requiring residents designated in the first phase to get a COVID-19 vaccination, but we strongly encourage everyone, residents and Buckner associates, to get vaccinated. Independent living residents may not be included in the first phase of people approved to receive the vaccine, but we are monitoring for new information.

Q. How do I know which vaccine to get?

A. Each state registered for one specific vaccine to begin. The state of Texas will receive the vaccine developed by Pfizer initially, potentially followed by the Moderna vaccine.

Q. How many shots of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?

A. All but one of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in Phase 3 clinical trials in the United States need two shots to be effective. The Pfizer vaccine, which is what the state of Texas will receive, requires two shots.

Q. Who is paying for the COVID-19 vaccine?

A. Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. Your health insurance company will cover the cost of any potential administrative fees charged by the vaccination provider. For those who are uninsured, the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund will cover the fee.

Q. If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine when it's available?

A. There is not enough information currently available to say if or for how long after infection someone is protected from getting COVID-19 again; this is called natural immunity. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long, but more studies are needed to better understand this. Until we have a vaccine available and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices makes recommendations to CDC on how to best use COVID-19 vaccines, CDC cannot comment on whether people who had COVID-19 should get a COVID-19 vaccine. We do know that those who previously tested as COVID-19 positive will not be denied the vaccine.

Q. Why would a vaccine be needed if we can do other things, like social distancing and wearing masks, to prevent the virus that causes COVID-19 from spreading?

A. Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other steps, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least 6 feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19.

Q. Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I have received two doses of the vaccine?

A. Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often and staying at least 6 feet away from others. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations for how to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19. Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide before deciding to change recommendations on steps everyone should take to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Other factors, including how many people

get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities, will also affect this decision.

Q. What are some of the possible side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?

A. The vaccines currently being tested in clinical trials can cause short-term discomfort (such as headache, muscle pains, fatigue, chills, fever, and pain at injection site) in a percentage of the people who receive them. This is the effect of your body developing immunity. Clinical trial participants reported that the discomfort went away after a day, sometimes sooner. When you receive the second dose of the vaccine, the discomfort can be more pronounced. This is a normal reaction, so be prepared.

If you experience discomfort after the first dose of the vaccine, it is very important that you still receive the second dose a few weeks later for the vaccine to be effective.

Side effects do not mean the vaccine gave you COVID-19. Rather, this means that the vaccine is causing your body's immune system to react and create antibodies to fight off the virus. In other words, if you feel some discomfort, then the vaccine is doing its job.

Children under 18 and women who are pregnant should not take the vaccine.

Q. Once a Buckner senior living community is fully vaccinated, how will that change the way it operates?

A. There is not enough information currently available to say if or when CDC will stop recommending that people wear masks and avoid close contact with others to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide before making that decision. Other factors, including how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities, will also affect this decision.

Buckner communities will continue to follow the guidance of the CDC, CMS and Texas Department of Health and Human Services as it pertains to long-term care communities and the proper safety procedures required to mitigate risks of transmission. For the foreseeable future, we will still impose safety restrictions on guest experiences and require masks, PPE and social distancing for associates and residents.

VACCINE SAFETY

Q. How is a vaccine developed and tested?

A. Approval of a vaccine for use in people involves multiple phases with different goals for assessing effectiveness and safety in different populations. There are a total of 4 phases and the vaccine must meet very intense safety criteria before completing each phase. Once a vaccine is approved for use after phase 3, it has been tested in tens of thousands of people and if no significant harmful side effects are noted, it is considered

safe for use. Phase 4 involves continued monitoring and gathering of safety data. This type of clinical trial has been used for decades to approve medications and vaccines.

Q. What are the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements for the safety and efficacy of a COVID-19 vaccine?

A. The FDA requires 50% efficacy of a COVID-19 vaccine (the COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna are showing 94-95% efficacy in preventing COVID-19 disease during this trial phase). Many other companies are working on a vaccine and we expect that others will be approved by the FDA. The FDA also requires eight weeks of safety data on the COVID-19 vaccine.

Q. How will we know the COVID-19 vaccines are safe?

A. Safety is the most important requirement for the vaccine and is assessed in trials by independent experts. Most adverse side effects occur within 6 weeks of vaccine administration, and the FDA has required 8 weeks of safety monitoring so it can track any side effects. The FDA advises a minimum of 3,000 participants to assess safety. The current phase 3 trials have 30,000 to 50,000 participants. This really demonstrates how safety is a top priority for the FDA and the medical community.

VACCINE DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION

Q. What is Operation Warp Speed, and what is its role with COVID-19 vaccines?

A. Operation Warp Speed is a partnership among components of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Defense to help develop, make, and distribute millions of vaccine doses for COVID-19 as quickly as possible while ensuring that the vaccines are safe and that they work.

Q. When will a COVID-19 vaccine be available in the United States?

A. The goal for Operation Warp Speed is to deliver safe vaccines that work, with the first supply becoming available before the end of 2020. When a vaccine is authorized or approved in the United States, there may not be enough doses available for all adults. Supplies will increase over time, and all adults should be able to get vaccinated later in 2021. However, a COVID-19 vaccine may not be available for young children until more studies are completed.

On December 2, 2020, Texas Governor Greg Abbott announced that COVID-19 vaccine distribution for nursing homes and LTC providers should begin December 14, 2020. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made an initial allotment of more than 1.4 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines to the State of Texas for the month of December. The state is still working on its distribution strategy.

Q. What has been done to plan for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in the U.S?

A. The federal government will oversee a centralized system to order, distribute and track COVID-19 vaccines. All vaccines will be ordered through CDC. Vaccine providers

will receive vaccines from CDC's centralized distributor or directly from a vaccine manufacturer.

Many COVID-19 vaccine candidates are in development, and clinical trials are being conducted at the same time with large-scale manufacturing. With first doses expected before the end of 2020, planning and preparing for a COVID-19 vaccination program is very important.

This situation continues to change, and planning will progress as more information about any authorized or approved vaccines becomes available. A safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is a critical component of the U.S. strategy to reduce COVID-19-related illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths and to help society function as it did before COVID-19. The goal of the U.S. government is to have enough COVID-19 vaccine doses for all people in the United States who choose to be vaccinated.

Q. How is Texas preparing to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine?

A. Once one or more COVID-19 vaccines are authorized by the Food and Drug Administration, vaccine will be in limited supply as production ramps up. During this period, Texas will receive regular allotments of vaccine from the federal government. Vaccine will be shipped directly to enrolled COVID-19 vaccine providers as allocated by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Those providers will then immunize Texans who choose to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

So that the vaccine can be deployed as effectively as possible, DSHS has created an Expert Vaccine Allocation Panel (EVAP) to make recommendations on vaccine allocation decisions, including identifying groups that should be vaccinated first to provide the most protection to vulnerable populations and critical state resources. The panel has recommended and the Commissioner of Health John Hellerstedt, MD, has approved the first phase of vaccine recipients to include hospital staff working directly with patients who are positive or at high risk for COVID-19, EMS providers, home health care workers, long-term care staff working directly with vulnerable residents, and residents of long-term care facilities.

SUPPLY & DEMAND OF THE VACCINE

Q. How is CDC working to make sure people want to and can get vaccinated once a COVID-19 vaccine is available?

A. CDC is working with partners across the country to make sure people have the information they need to be confident in deciding to get vaccinated. Key priorities for CDC are:

- Regularly sharing clear and accurate information with people to make sure they understand the risks and benefits of getting vaccinated and can make informed decisions.

- Helping healthcare personnel feel confident in their decision to get a COVID-19 vaccine and helping healthcare providers answer their patients' questions about the vaccine.
- Engaging communities and individuals in an equitable and inclusive way to ensure that people have opportunities to ask questions and get clear, accurate information about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Easy access to COVID-19 vaccines is equally critical. CDC is working with public health, healthcare providers, and other partners to make sure people can easily get a COVID-19 vaccine and that cost is not a barrier.

Q. Will there be enough vaccine for everyone?

A. When FDA first authorizes or approves the use of one or more COVID-19 vaccines in the United States, there may be a limited supply. This would mean that not everyone will be able to be vaccinated right away. It is understandable how concerning this would be for people, especially for those who are at increased risk for serious illness from this virus and for their loved ones.

That is why, early in the response, the federal government began investing in select vaccine manufacturers to help them increase their ability to quickly make and distribute a large amount of COVID-19 vaccine. This will allow the United States to start with as much vaccine as possible and continually increase the supply in the weeks and months to follow. The goal is for everyone to be able to easily get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as large quantities are available. Several thousand vaccination providers will be available, including doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, hospitals and federally qualified health centers.

Q. How is the government deciding who gets the COVID-19 vaccine first?

A. At first, there will be a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine. Operation Warp Speed is working to get those first vaccine doses out once a vaccine is authorized or approved and recommended, rather than waiting until there is enough vaccine for everyone. However, it is important that the initial supplies of vaccine are given to people in a fair, ethical, and transparent way. The CDC is making COVID-19 vaccine recommendations based on input from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

Q. How many COVID-19 vaccines are under development?

A. Multiple COVID-19 vaccines are under development. As of November 24, 2020, large-scale (Phase 3) clinical trials are in progress or being planned for five COVID-19 vaccines in the United States.